

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 27, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 15

Introduced by Assembly Member Furutani

January 29, 2009

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 15—Relative to the John Sanford Todd Memorial Highway.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 15, as amended, Furutani. John Sanford Todd Memorial Highway.

This measure would designate the portion of State Highway Route 605 between Carson Street and Del Amo Boulevard, in the County of Los Angeles, as the John Sanford Todd Memorial Highway. The measure would also request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost for appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, The young community of Lakewood, that John
2 Sanford Todd joined in 1949, had gone from practically no
3 population to nearly 100,000 residents in 1953. This population
4 growth raised a huge question of whether the unincorporated
5 community should be absorbed into the City of Long Beach or
6 whether the families of Lakewood should take on the risks of
7 cityhood; and
8 WHEREAS, John Sanford Todd joined the battle to keep
9 Lakewood independent when the City of Long Beach began a

1 series of annexation elections in 1953. With other community
2 members, John Sanford Todd mounted a spirited campaign to
3 prevent “piecemeal annexation.” It was his strategy of appealing
4 each annexation election as soon as it was announced that stalled
5 the City of Long Beach’s plans, although Lakewood Village and
6 a few other neighborhoods accepted annexation; and

7 WHEREAS, Annexation was stopped, but Lakewood’s future
8 was still in doubt. John Sanford Todd took up the next challenge,
9 working with other leaders to circulate incorporation petitions
10 based on the radical idea that Lakewood had the resources to be a
11 city; and

12 WHEREAS, The heart of the argument for cityhood was a plan,
13 which was called “the Lakewood plan.” John Sanford Todd
14 conceived the idea that unincorporated communities did not have
15 to choose between annexation by a big city or building a costly
16 civic infrastructure from scratch. Instead, he believed that city
17 councils could turn to the county to deliver municipal services
18 through a system of contracts; and

19 WHEREAS, Convinced that the plan would work, Lakewood
20 voters made their community a city in 1954 and the first in the
21 nation to supply all of its services by contract. Today, the
22 contracting plan that John Sanford Todd created shapes the future
23 of one-quarter of California cities; and

24 WHEREAS, The Lakewood plan’s “father” became its chief
25 interpreter when the first Lakewood City Council met on April
26 16, 1954. The new council members appointed John Sanford Todd
27 as Lakewood’s City Attorney. He held that office until 2004, a
28 period of 50 years, and was one of the longest serving city attorneys
29 in California history; and

30 WHEREAS, As the city’s legal counsel over that period of 50
31 years, John Sanford Todd drafted hundreds of ordinances, policies,
32 regulations, and resolutions. The quality of everyday life in
33 Lakewood can be directly attributed to the body of law of which
34 John Sanford Todd was the principal author; and

35 WHEREAS, As important as that work was, it was not *John*
36 *Sanford Todd’s* greatest achievement; and

37 WHEREAS, Almost as soon as Lakewood was formed, some
38 cities sought to undermine the basis of the contract plan with the
39 county. The new contract cities were threatened by a series of

1 political and legal maneuvers that would have made the Lakewood
2 plan impossible; and

3 WHEREAS, With John Sanford Todd's guidance, contract cities
4 fought back. In 1957, they formed what would become the
5 California Contract Cities Association. With John Sanford Todd
6 as lead counsel, those cities took their cause to the Los Angeles
7 County Grand Jury, the California Legislature, and the courts. The
8 Lakewood plan was finally vindicated in a landmark ruling by the
9 State Court of Appeals in 1977; and

10 WHEREAS, John Sanford Todd served in other ways, including
11 as an officer in the contract-city *cities* association and in the
12 statewide League of California Cities. He was, for a time, the City
13 Attorney of Pico Rivera as well as Lakewood. And he was the first
14 legal counsel of the California Joint Powers Insurance Authority,
15 an agency that provides member cities with insurance protection;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, "Preservation" might be one of the major themes
18 of John Sanford Todd's career as city attorney, legal counsel, and
19 defender of the Lakewood plan. "Innovation" was another major
20 theme of his career. John Sanford Todd saw more clearly than
21 others that new forms of local government were needed for the
22 new cities of California; and

23 WHEREAS, John ~~Sanford~~ *Sanford* Todd died August 30, 2008,
24 at the age of 89, and is survived by two sons and five
25 grandchildren; *and*

26 WHEREAS, Future Lakewood City Council members will miss
27 John Sanford Todd's wise advice. They will remember his
28 contributions with pride. Lakewood residents will honor him
29 always as a true "Lakewood legend"; and

30 WHEREAS, There will always be only one John Sanford Todd,
31 "the Legend of Lakewood," and Lakewood's first City Attorney;
32 now, therefore, be it

33 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
34 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature designates the portion of
35 State Highway Route 605 between Carson Street and Del Amo
36 Boulevard, in the County of Los Angeles, as the John Sanford
37 Todd Memorial Highway; and be it further

38 *Resolved*, That the Department of Transportation is requested
39 to determine the cost of appropriate signs, consistent with the
40 signing requirements for the state highway system, showing this

1 special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate
2 sources sufficient to cover that cost, to erect those signs; and be it
3 further
4 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
5 of this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the
6 author for appropriate distribution.

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